

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases which has a structure in which:

a columnar body made of porous ceramic comprises a number of through holes, said through holes being placed in parallel with one another in the length direction with wall portion interposed therebetween;

predetermined through holes of said through holes are filled with plugs at one end of said columnar body, while the through holes that have not been filled with said plugs at said one end are filled with plugs at the other end of said columnar body; and

a part or all of said wall portion functions as a filter for collecting particulates, wherein

a bending strength $F\alpha$ (MPa) of said honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases and a length L (mm) of said plug in the length direction of the through hole satisfy the relationship of $F\alpha \times L \geq 30$.

Claim 2 (Original): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 1,

wherein

the bending strength $F\alpha$ (MPa) of the honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases and the length L (mm) of the plug in the length direction of said through hole satisfy the relationship of $F\alpha \times L \leq 200$.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 1 or 2,

wherein

a catalyst is attached thereon.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1,

wherein

collected and accumulated fine particles are removed by a back washing process using a gas flow.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1,

wherein

collected and accumulated fine particles are removed by heating exhaust gases and allowing the heated gases to flow therein.

Claim 6 (New): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 2,

wherein

a catalyst is attached thereon.

Claim 7 (New): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 2,

wherein

collected and accumulated fine particles are removed by a back washing process using a gas flow.

Claim 8 (New): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 3,

wherein

collected and accumulated fine particles are removed by a back washing process using a gas flow.

Claim 9 (New): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 6,

wherein

collected and accumulated fine particles are removed by a back washing process using a gas flow.

Claim 10 (New): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 2,

wherein

collected and accumulated fine particles are removed by heating exhaust gases and allowing the heated gases to flow therein.

Claim 11 (New): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 3,

wherein

collected and accumulated fine particles are removed by heating exhaust gases and allowing the heated gases to flow therein.

Claim 12 (New): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 6,

wherein

collected and accumulated fine particles are removed by heating exhaust gases and allowing the heated gases to flow therein.